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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/823,928	04/14/2004	Derek Humphries	ACOP.36235	5291
116	7590	03/24/2005	EXAMINER	
PEARNE & GORDON LLP 1801 EAST 9TH STREET SUITE 1200 CLEVELAND, OH 44114-3108			MAYO, TARA L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3671	

DATE MAILED: 03/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/823,928

Applicant(s)

HUMPHRIES ET AL.

Examiner

Tara L. Mayo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE three MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 13-22 and 24 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 2 7-12 23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04/14/04 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20040730.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

Specification

2. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions, wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

3. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it compares the invention with the prior art. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With regard to claim 7, it is unclear how a rectangular drainage grate can have a diameter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1, 2, 7 through 12 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Middleton et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,767,456 B2) in view of Thomann et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,553,874).

Middleton et al. '456, as seen in Figure 1a, show a reinforced drainage grate assembly (10) comprising:

with regard to claim 1,

a drainage grate (34) having a planar drainage surface including a plurality of apertures and a pair of side portions (40) extending orthogonally below said surface; and

a reinforcing member (32) disposed between the side portions and the underside of the drainage surface, said reinforcing member including a plurality of apertures, wherein at least a portion of said apertures are co-registered with at least a portion of said apertures in said drainage surface;

with regard to claim 2,

wherein a plurality of said apertures of said reinforcing member are of substantially the same dimensions as, and co-registered with, a corresponding plurality of said apertures in said drainage surface;

with regard to claims 8 and 9,

the reinforcing member being formed of a single piece of material;

with regard to claim 10,

wherein the area of said upper surface of said reinforcing member is greater than the area of said apertures in said reinforcing member;

with regard to claim 12,

wherein said reinforcing member includes a plurality of apertures disposed in a line substantially perpendicularly between said side portions of said drainage grate; and

with regard to claim 23,

wherein said reinforcing member includes at least one elongate fastening member (40) extending orthogonally from a bottom surface thereof, said fastening member including an enlarged distal end portion (as seen in Figure 1a).

Middleton et al. '456 fail to teach:

with regard to claim 1,

the drainage grate including a bottom flange extending toward the opposing one of side portions;

with regard to claim 7,

the grate being rectangular;

with regard to claims 8 and 9,

the reinforcing member being formed from plastic; and

with regard to claim 11,

the reinforcing member including a plurality of apertures disposed orthogonally between the side portions of the drainage grate.

Thomann et al. '874, as seen in Figures 4 and 6, show a drainage grate comprising a planar surface, orthogonally extending side portions and including a bottom flange extending toward the opposing one of said side portions.

With regard to claim 1, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of drainage at the time the invention was made to modify the device shown by Middleton et

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al. '456 such that it would include a flange as taught by Thomann et al. '874 to provide the assembly with a shoulder for retaining the reinforcing member against the underside of the drainage grate.

With regard to claim 7, it has been held that matters relating to ornamentation only which have no mechanical function cannot be relied upon to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. *In re Seid*, 161 F.2d 229, 73 USPQ 431 (CCPA 1947).

With regard to claim claims 8 and 9, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of drainage at the time the invention was made to make the reinforcing member of the device shown by the combination of Middleton et al. '456 and Thomann et al. '874 of plastic because of its non-corrosive properties.

With regard to claim 11, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of drainage at the time the invention was made to modify the device shown by the combination of Middleton et al. '456 and Thomann et al. '874 such that it would further include apertures disposed orthogonally between side portions of the drainage grate. The motivation would have been to facilitate connection of the assembly to a surrounding wall structure.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 13 through 22 and 24 are allowed.

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10. Claims 3 through 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

11. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tara L. Mayo whose telephone number is 703-305-3019. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 703-308-3870. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.


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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



tlm

19 March 2005



Thomas B. Will
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3600